

# Cache Conservation News

## Fall 2000

*A newsletter of the Blacksmith Fork and North Cache Soil Conservation Districts*

*Every day is Earth Day for Farmers and Ranchers*

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

*By S. Bruce Karren, Chairman*

*North Cache Soil Conservation District*

It's election time again. A time when too many Americans choose not to voice their opinion (and just complain).

And that's too bad. Because the right to vote is at the very heart of our democracy. It is our opportunity to choose the leaders who will guide our state and nation down the path we designate.

A government poster produced in Chicago decades ago may have said it best: "Bad officials are elected by good citizens who do not vote."

So if you're concerned about conservation of our natural resources and whether or not state and federal officials provide the funding necessary to ensure landowner participation, vote.

If you care about the legacy we will leave for our children and grandchildren, vote.

If you want to ensure a brighter future for agriculture, vote. Make your voice heard.

**Vote November 7th.**

## EXTENSION CORNER

### Protect your water rights: Create a paper trail

Utah water law is complex, and loaded with pitfalls. All water, both above and below ground, is owned by the State. A water right means we have the right to put the water to beneficial use. Because there is such a strong demand (most water is fully appropriated), we lose the right to the water if we don't use it.

A Washington County case involves partial forfeiture of water rights for non-use. Party A sold some agricultural land for development and filed a change application with the State Water Engineer. Party B is challenging the transfer, contending Party A's original water right was not entirely used; therefore the portion not used in the previous five years should revert back to the state for assignment to new applicants. Had Party A used his full allocation only one year in five, there would be no debate. Five *consecutive* years of non-use is the key.

A non-use application can be recorded with the State Water Engineer if one chooses to postpone use of allocated water. Or a temporary change application may be filed, if leasing water to a neighbor for a period of time.

Another concern is the use of water for purposes different from the original permit. Most agricultural producers have a compound water right that includes the number of stock to be watered, acres to be

irrigated, and amount for domestic use. Most of us are able to irrigate more acres now than formerly because of more efficient irrigation practices. Many of us are now watering more livestock than recorded in our original permit.

Perhaps we need to visit the local office of the Utah Division of Water Rights (752-8755) to identify and correct any problems our operations may have now, and create a paper trail to prevent difficulties in the future.

--Clark Israelsen  
Cache County Extension Agent

## **Cache County Water Advisory Board goes to work**

The first two meetings of the reconstituted Cache County Water Policy Advisory Board have resulted in an organization designed to invite public participation in determining water policy. Ann Peralta is chair person, Bill Bullen is vice chairman. Thad Erickson is the coordinator, and Pat Parker, Assistant to the Cache County Executive and County Council, serves as Secretary to the Board.

Five committees have been established. They are:

- Stormwater, concerning storm drainage and irrigation canals;
- Public Information, Education, and Conservation,
- Grants and Funding, to coordinate the search for funding with other organizations;
- Contingency committee, to deal with present and future water supply, aquifers, and water transfers
- Environment and Multiple Use

"We invite people to participate in the committees," said Ann Peralta. "If you have a burning desire to participate in any of these areas, call me (563-0356) or Thad (716-7154), and I will let you know when that committee meets."

The board will consider next year's budget at its October 17 meeting. The proposal to enlarge the Hyrum dam and reservoir will be presented to the board on November 21. Meetings are at 4:30 pm on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, in the county council chambers

## **ACTION BY THE BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS**

### ***Joint Action***

- Participated in Natural Resources Field Trip for fifth-graders;
- Participated in Farm Field Day for third-graders;
- Acting as Cache County Ag Protection Area Advisory Board, recommended approval for Pyrenees Dairy and Wilkinson Brothers;
- Exhibited PAWS on Wheels mobile classroom at the Cache County Fair.

### ***Blacksmith Fork***

- Approved Memorandum of Understanding with the NRCS.
- Approved conservation plan for Margaret Robbins, Max Wilkinson, Tony Ward, Kurt Mitton (for planning), and Tom Maughan (reinstated);
- Accepted Margaret Robbins and Tony Ward as cooperators.

### ***North Cache***

- Approved conservation plans or revisions for Beth Macatee, John Harrison, Brooks Tarbet, Keller Cattle Corp., Evelyn Hansen, Ross Wangsgaard, L. Brad Fisher, Richard Stewart, Lyman Godfrey, and Regan Wheeler (amendment);

- Accepted John Harrison, Keller Cattle Corp. Hansen, Wangsgaard, and Stewart as cooperators.
- Nominated Jack Greene as Teacher of the Year.
- Sponsored Utah Envirothon team to the national competition in Nova Scotia.

## Cub River Water Quality Improvement Project receives additional funds

The Cub River Water Quality Improvement Project has received additional funds for individual projects within the watershed. In September the Utah Nonpoint Source Pollution Task Force approved an additional \$162,000 to be used for conservation practices similar to the four demonstration projects already under way, including improvements to animal feeding operations, protection of streambanks and improved land management.

In addition, the Cub River project is one step closer to development of a watershed management plan with the completion of a study by White Horse Associates. The study documents streambank conditions within the Cub River watershed, including all tributaries, and prioritizes the most degraded areas.

Landowners interested in more information on the watershed project, are invited to call Jon Hardman, 753-5616, ext. 25.

-- Jennifer Hinees, UACD

## Free well water testing still available

Many well owners responded to the offer to test their wells by the Utah Dept. of Agriculture and Food. The tests are voluntary, free of charge, and confidential. A complete report is provided to the well owner. If you would like to have your well tested, but just haven't gotten around to it, contact Penny Trinca at 753-6029.

## Study: Groundwater provides alternative to dams

"Storage and extraction of groundwater can be a viable alternative to building dams" in Cache Valley, according to a report recently presented to the Cache County Water Policy Advisory Board. The report, authored by Dr. Robert Q. Oaks, Jr., professor emeritus, Department of Geology at USU, is entitled *Geologic history of tertiary deposits between the lower Bear River drainage basin and the Cache Valley basin, North-Central Utah*. The study was made for the Bear River Water Conservancy District, Box Elder County, and the Utah Division of Water Resources.

Oaks reached several important conclusions relative to Cache Valley:

- A major fault trends across the proposed site of the Amalga Barrens Dam. If this fault is still active, it could make construction of a dam there a hazardous venture.
- Stream flood plains are recharge areas and are critical for protection from contamination.
- In the midsection of the east margin of Cache Valley in Utah, thick "benches" produce abundant good quality water near recharge areas.
- Aquifers in Tertiary units are limited in extent. Water availability should be proven sustainable before approval of high-density housing on the Salt Lake Formation.
- Communities on Tertiary units may want to import water by pipeline or drill through the Tertiary sediments into Paleozoic bedrock in order to accommodate growth.
- Water stock and mineral rights are often sold separately from the land. Prospective buyers of property should be made aware of such issues at time of purchase.

- As urbanization proceeds, thought should be given by planners to improved access to upslope irrigation canals for lawn watering or secondary water systems. This might become part of the solution for drainage of stormwater runoff.

The study shows that accurate geologic information is needed for reliable prediction of sustainable pumping rates, for resolution of disputes over water rights, and for appropriate planning for development in recharge areas.

## **Bear River development plan updated**

The Bear River, sometimes called "Utah's last untapped water source," is one of only a few rivers in Utah that still has a surplus water supply.

A 21-page status report entitled *Bear River Development* was recently released by the state Division of Water Resources.

The Bear River Plan, originally developed in response to the Bear River Development Act approved by the legislature in 1991, has been modified to 1) change the existing operation of Willard Bay by agreement with the Weber Basin Water Conservancy District; 2) connect the Bear River with a pipeline or canal to Willard Bay; 3) construct facilities to deliver water from Willard Bay to the Wasatch Front; and 4) build a dam in the Bear River Basin.

The first, second, and third parts of the plan would be timed to deliver water to the Wasatch Front by about the year 2015. "Part 4 would be carried out when the Bear River Water Conservancy District and/or Cache County water users need the water," according to the report.

The report emphasizes that because of the extended time period the plan could be modified again, and that public opinion will be a major determining factor.

## **New incentives announced for buffer strip construction**

Secretary Glickman recently announced a new package of incentives for the continuous CRP sign-up. They include:

- A sign-up bonus for selected buffer practices of \$100 per acre for 10-year contracts and \$150 per acre for 15-year contracts;
- A 40-percent incentive on cost-sharing for practice installation;
- Higher annual maintenance payments per acre in certain circumstances; and
- A restructured rental rate system that usually pays landowners more for installing riparian buffers on marginal pastureland, which includes rangeland that has never been seeded.

"Higher payments should persuade more landowners to participate, protecting ever more environmentally sensitive land along streams, rivers, wetlands, and public water supplies," said Glickman.

## **CONSERVATION CLASSROOM: Agriculture in the Classroom offers Logan workshop**

Are you looking for ways to teach the importance of agriculture to your students? Do you need teaching materials, but don't know where to get them?

The "Food, Land & People" workshop may be for you. The theme has been combined with the Utah State Core Curriculum to present social studies, science, math, economics and healthy life styles into one package. Designed for 2nd to 5th grade teachers, the workshop will make it easy for you to translate core

objectives into real-world examples and activities for your students. You will take home free samples, lesson plans, and activity information.

The Workshop will be held from 4:00 to 8:30 PM November 14 and 15. Deadline for registration is November 1. Registration is \$25 for each teacher. Participants may earn credit from USU (\$15 recording fee) or licensure points. For more information call Agriculture in the Classroom at (435)797-1657 or visit its website [www.ext.usu.edu/aitc](http://www.ext.usu.edu/aitc). Contact Jennifer Hines at 753-6029 for information about scholarships offered by the conservation districts.

## ALPHABET SOUP

CBSA -- Core Based Statistical Areas  
OMB -- Office of Management and Budget  
WPAB -- Water Policy Advisory Board  
CNMP -- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan  
UACD -- Utah Association of Conservation Districts  
PAWS -- Plands, animals, water and soils

## Logan team represents Utah in Nova Scotia

A five-member team from Logan High School represented Utah at the Canon Envirothon July 31 to Aug. 5 in Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

The all-female team, sponsored by the North Cache Soil Conservation District, learned about Nova Scotian natural resources and met high-school students from 40 states and eight Canadian provinces.

"It was a great trip and such a good experience," said Mary Cheney, a team member. "It was so great to meet with people from Canada and talk about issues we understand – like watersheds." Other team members were Amber Westenskow, Nelda Ault, Janelle Durst and Claire Neuber. Logan High science teacher Jack Greene is the team adviser.

The Canon Envirothon is the largest high school natural resource competition in North America and is sponsored in Utah by the Utah Association of Conservation Districts. This year's winning team at the Canon Envirothon was Pennsylvania. The Utah Envirothon team placed 22<sup>nd</sup> of 48 teams.

-- Jennifer Hines, UACD

## Census data changes could impact Cache County

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has proposed new categories in classifying data from the year 2000 census. The categories "metropolitan areas" and "micropolitan areas" would be established. Together, they would be called "Core Based Statistical Areas" (CBSAs). CBSAs would include the densely populated metropolitan areas, plus smaller micropolitan areas of 10,000 to 49,999 population.

Using 1990 census data, the new categories would leave only 10% of the nation's population outside the CBSAs. The Census Bureau has stressed that "outside CBSA" is *not* rural. However, some people have expressed concern that it would be a quick and easy way to define rural, and would, in fact, be used for that purpose.

"It is likely that the current practice of referring only to the metropolitan/non-metropolitan split will continue," wrote Joe Dudick, executive director of the Pennsylvania Rural Development Council. "The OMB definition all too often becomes the default definition used to determine which places are 'urban' and which are 'rural'" As a result, 642 counties (probably including Cache County) would change from nonmetropolitan areas to metropolitan or micropolitan status.

Solutions that might work for the Front Range may not work for rural counties that would be redefined as micropolitan. The proposed system would impact the distribution of funds from federal programs that distinguish between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. The proposed changes were published August 22 in the Federal Register, and were open for comment until October 6.

## **GLEANINGS**

Psomas and Associates and Cirrus Ecological Solution were selected by the Utah Division of Water Quality to study Spring Creek. Charles Gillette of Psomas is the project leader, and Eric Duffin of Cirrus is the principle investigator.

-- Mike Allred, Utah Div. of Water Quality

The Utah Nonpoint Source (NPS) Task Force has approved 21 projects for submission to EPA for funding in 2000. Most of the money will be spent on restoration projects and animal manure management projects in priority watersheds. The Cub River will probably be the next big watershed effort to be funded, with \$240,000 approved to begin the effort.

The state Division of Water Resources has begun work on a revision of the State Water Plan for the Bear River Basin. An advisory group is expected to be appointed later this year, and public meetings will be held next year.

The Idaho NRCS, in cooperation with the Aberdeen Plant Materials Center, has planted a 1400-foot 8-row windbreak to provide a screen between a Catholic monastery and a new 5,000-head dairy. It will be used to study the effectiveness of windbreaks. When the windbreak matures, it will lift air currents, carrying dairy odors over the monastery

-- NRCS This Week, 7/14/00

Recently released data from the NRCS 2001 Workload Analysis estimates the need for approximately 20,100 partnership staff years to effectively address private lands natural resources issues according to current policy requirements. An estimated 15,100 staff years are available at the field level.

-- e-Notes from NACD, 8/29/00

Investments in resource conservation help improve the value of assets owned by family farms and ranches, which may create a serious estate tax problem for children or grandchildren who inherit family farms. Farmers and ranchers should consult with their tax attorney, accountant, or financial planner on ways to pass on assets while avoiding or minimizing estate taxes.

-- NRCS This Week 9/8/00

## **EQIP at work for farmers, ranchers**

In fiscal year 1999, over 56,500 requests were received for EQIP contracts and 19,015 contracts totaling \$140.9 million were completed. Local working groups have identified 2,130 conservation priority areas, of which 64 percent have received at least partial funding to address natural resource concerns, such as soil erosion reduction, water quality improvement, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

-- NRCS This Week 8/25/00

## **Just what exactly is an ARDL?**

No, it isn't someone gargling. ARDL is short for Agriculture Resource Development Loan. It is a low-cost loan program operated by the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food to help farmers and ranchers in projects that meet the conservation and pollution reduction goals of the program.

There are more than \$25.1 million in ARDL fund assets. Since 1987, the program has funded nearly \$38.6 million in conservation projects. Projects include such improvements as sprinklers, gated pipes, lined ditches, and windbreaks on 113,595 acres of cropland and improvements on nearly 186,000 acres of rangeland.

The ARDL fund is a revolving fund. It grows each year as the loans and interest are paid. Eligible projects include animal waste management, streamside improvement, water management, rangeland improvement, and wind erosion control. The projects are assessed a 4% technical assistance fee. The annual interest rate is only 3%. ARDL funds may be combined with other grants and loans in order to provide the maximum benefit to conservation.

To apply for a loan, submit an application to the Soil Conservation District office. If the application meets the ARDL program guidelines, a specialist will help you design and develop the project. After the plan is developed, you will be asked to present it to your soil conservation district board of supervisors for review.

The supervisors are your neighbors, familiar with farming practices in Cache Valley. They may have ideas that will help you improve your project. When the supervisors approve the plan, it is sent to the Utah Dept. of Agriculture and Food, which will determine your eligibility for credit and prepare the loan papers. When the process is completed, you will be able to begin your project.

For more information and an application, contact Penny at the district office, 753-6029.

## COMING EVENTS

*Cache County Water Policy Advisory Board*, meets at 4:30 pm on the third Tuesday of every month in the County Council Chambers, Logan.

*Utah Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting*, Nov. 1-3, 2000, St. George.

*Pesticide recertification workshop*, Room 108A, ASTE Bldg, 1498 N 800 East; 6:00 to 9:00pm Nov. 1 for private applicators, and 9:00am to 4:00pm Nov. 2 for commercial/noncommercial applicators. Call Mark Ashcroft at 752-6263 for more information

*Utah Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting*, Nov. 16–19, Salt Lake City.

*First National Conference on Grazing Lands*, Dec. 3–8, 2000, Las Vegas, Nev.

*National Association of Conservation Districts 55th annual meeting*, Fort Worth, Texas, Feb. 4–7, 2001

end